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Date   : 04/29/2004
Re   : DRAFT notes on 09/972,791

Number of pages (Including cover sheet):   2

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this application prior to my filing a formal response. I have outlined below what I believe are the key issues. I will call in a few days to followup, or feel free to phone me anytime at 781-526-2462.

In claim 1, the target identifier, the list and the target data object were said to be unclear. (office action, item 14, bottom of page 3) Claim 1 has been rewritten as new claim 34 to clarify these items. The list is a list of search results, the target data object is the particular result which is to be displayed, and the target identifier indicates (or, informally, "points to") the target data object. This usage of the term "identifier" is consistent with related usage in computer science, e.g. "identifier" is the formal name for what programmers casually refer to as a "variable name" in program code.

Revisions to claim 1 as new claim 34 also address the objection as to being indefinite. As a whole, new claim 34 now distinctly claims the invention's subject matter: providing direct access to EVERY data object resulting from a search while displaying ANY of these data objects.

The specification and drawings refer informally to the "current data object" and formally to the "target data object" as synonyms. Applicant believes that this usage will be understood in the context of the specification by one of ordinary skill in the art. If the examiner believes that the application will be more clear by choosing one term or the other, and if the examiner agrees that such a change does not introduce new matter, applicant is willing to alter the specification and/or drawings to replace any or all occurances with "current" or "target" or even "current target".

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Claims 1-15, 19 and 24 were rejected under 0103 as being unpatentable over SCALEPlus (SCALEPlus User manual, Version 3.0, 20/1/98).

However, SCALEPlus does not provide access to EVERY data object when displaying a specific data object.

SCALEPlus supports "Full Text Searching - Through the Verity Search Engine" (page 4) and "Previous and Next Document in a Results List navigation without going back to the Results List" (pages 4 and 9). The limitations of these exact features, including a specific reference to the Verity search engine (which is a market leader), are discussed in the patent application as filed (applicant, p. 5, lines 3-10). The key novel feature of applicant's invention is to link to EVERY document (or, in general, every data object) in the result list rather than just to the previous and next documents. Despite a very wide variety of search products and services in several intensely competitive markets, no known search includes the novel, time-saving features of applicant's invention. Thus, applicant asserts that the novel feature is not obvious and is patentable over SCALEPlus and therefore requests withdrawal of this objection to claims 1, 29 and

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Based on the above (and several corrections to technical matters identified by the examiner), here is claim 1 rewritten as new claim 34.

34. A system that provides direct access to every data object while displaying any data object on a visual display unit via a client process, each data object resulting from searching an information location mechanism, each data object having an identifier, each data object having a plurality of data elements, each data element having some or no contents, one of said data elements being a title, the system comprising:

an instruction port configured to receive a target identifier that indicates
which data object is the target data object to be displayed on the visual display unit;

a list port configured to receive a list of data object identifiers, each data
object identifier indicating one data object resulting from searching the information location mechanism;

a data port configured to receive the target data object;

an output port configured to output the target data object and a navigation
control to the client process; and

a controller configured to:

receive the target identifier from the instruction port,

receive the list from the list port,

receive the target data object from the data port,

create the navigation control with one navigation element for each data object
in the list, with the exception of the target data object, wherein the navigation control uses less display area than the display area occupied by the aggregate of the titles of every data object in the list, and

send the data object and the navigation control to the output port
;

thereby saving a user time by enabling the user to access any data object that met their search criteria while viewing any target data object and without returning each time to the list of data objects resulting from their search.

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If new claim 34 is not believed to be in full condition for allowance, applicant (acting Pro Se) respectfully requests the constructive assistance and suggestions of the Examiner pursuant to M.P.E.P. ○2173.02 and ○707.07(j) regarding changes that would yield an allowable claim.

best regards,

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